

WORD FROM THE PASTOR

LORD TEACH US HOW TO PRAY



This Sunday's Gospel tells us about Jesus praying alone, alone. **“When He had finished, one of His disciples asked Him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray as John the Baptist taught his disciples.’ And He replied, ‘When you pray, say, Father.’** This word is the secret of Jesus' prayer. It is the key He Himself gives us. This is how we too can enter confidential dialogue with the Father who accompanied Him throughout His life.

The first petitions tell us that we must be concerned with the reign of God, His glory, and His will. We are invited to give God his full place in our lives. He asks only to exercise His lordship of love. It is in our lives that God's holiness must be manifest. Through these petitions, we express our gratitude to the Father Who fills us with his love.

Three other petitions complete this prayer that Jesus teaches us. These three requests concern **bread, forgiveness, and help in temptations**. This is important because we cannot live without bread; we cannot live without forgiveness or without God's help in temptations. But Saint Cyprian tells us that the most essential bread is that of the Eucharist. We must hope that Christians will nourish themselves with this bread to be transformed by Christ. It is there that they find the light and strength of his grace.

Forgiveness is, above all, which we receive from God: He shows Himself to be the Father when He frees our hearts and gives us new life. We are all sinners forgiven by the infinite mercy of the Father. This forgiveness makes us capable of concrete gestures of fraternal reconciliation. If we do not recognize that we are forgiven sinners, we will never be able to perform gestures of fraternal reconciliation. It is by accepting God's forgiveness that we learn to forgive our brothers and sisters.

“And lead us not into temptation...” We know that we are all exposed to the traps of evil. This temptation is that of despair; it is when we think that God has abandoned us. Jesus teaches us to turn to the Father and ask Him to free us from this evil that seeks to destroy us.

Jesus' teaching continues with two parables. He models the attitude of a friend toward another friend, then that of a father toward his son. **We find here an invitation to trust in God Who is the Father; He knows better than we do what we need. But as with Abraham in the first reading, we must present our requests to Him boldly and insistently.** This is our way of participating in His work of salvation.

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus specifies that what we must above all ask for is the Holy Spirit. This was the prayer of the apostles as they prepared for Pentecost. **In communion with one another, we implore the Father: Give us your Holy Spirit. May He be with us to live this week with WISDOM AND LOVE, doing God's Will.**

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